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1. Under the Communist regime, not only is the public denied military and political factual news to be able to exercise intelligent judgment on public affairs, but the scholars and students are denied the use of social and economic data for educational and research purposes. Publication of handbooks or yearbooks, naturally continues but the data contained in them are unusable for scientific purposes for the most part, as they are either obviously unreliable, or too fragmentary, or consolidated so that they cannot be analysed. The spy-conscious authorities put practically everything under confidential classification. They say that, in order to bring about the success of the construction of a new China, the general public does not need this knowledge, rather, it would be better to keep the public from it.
2. In the pre-Communist days, social and economic data used to come either by private research in educational institutions or by government publication. But now, all research projects of private individuals come under the scrutiny of the government, as they must be reported for approval to the educational administration, and approval seldom comes if the project is a piece of field research. Projects using books and documentary sources containing old data alone remain fairly free.
3. Government organizations have not only stopped publishing data, but also refuse to give out anything upon inquiry. Population data used to be obtained from the municipal government by either writing or by personal contact. But now, population data is considered confidential and one is afraid even to ask for it. One attempt was met with a stiff rebuff, even when the data was requested for legitimate instruction in a population course. Data as common as employment, wages and price indexes are put in the confidential classification, though for the time being they still can be dealt with to a limited extent by private research.
4. But this does not mean that the government has no data; in fact, it has perhaps more than did the Nationalist regime. The number of items the government wants to know has mostly increased, and investigation work, compared to that under the Nationalists, is organized, systematic and conscientiously carried out, in spite of the lack of scientific training of the workers in the technique of data collection. This is especially so with local data. In a way, the Communist government is quite data conscious. Time and again,

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local organizations of the government from the village level up have complained of having to fill in too many tables and answer too many data questions. Data of all types flows to provincial, regional and central organizations from very extensive areas, many of which had no data in the pre-Communist days. Quite a bit of such data are printed regularly by the government, but only for confidential circulation among higher circles.

5. Even an organization as important as the All-China Federation of Labor, however, did not have a statistical expert until the Soviet advisers started a training class for them sometime last summer, and yet that organization possesses a rich store of data on employment and wages from all parts of the country. SHIH Kuo-hang, a Harvard trained instructor on labor problems in Tsinghua University in Peking worked last summer for the Institute of Social Sciences in the Central Institute of Sciences, (formerly the Academia Sinica). He tried to get some data on wages by visiting shops and factories in several North China cities. He got very meagre results because of the reluctance of larger factories to give necessary information. Then, the National Conference on Wages was called by the All-China Federation of Labor, and SHIH was permitted to attend one of the sessions. There, he was amazed at the amount of data available, but he was not allowed to take notes, even though he was working for the Institute of Sciences, which is a government organization. He was given to understand that, he should work in the Federation on wages if he was serious in getting some research done, and that the Union could use him. SHIH's case is important, for it illustrates what is happening in all other fields in the social sciences. To do research in a certain field, one will have to either work in government department dealing with that field or become very closely connected with it, before one can get access to the necessary data. This makes it very hard to supply up-to-date materials for college teaching in social sciences, even in government universities, and the training of student for objective understanding of recent trends of social developments will be very hard if not impossible.
6. Meanwhile the confidential circles, the core of the government, have all the available facts, and provided they can command the scientific skill to analyze these facts, are able to understand and control the trends completely without the participation of public reaction and opinion. Social scientists in China are now fully aware of this difficulty and danger, for they realize that they will have to join the government in some way if they intend to continue academic research. Almost every conversation among social scientists will eventually drift into this perplexing and disheartening problem.
7. Social scientists have already entered government service in one way or another pretty widely in all parts of the country, especially in the Northeast and in North China. Everything, including education and research, is and should be a branch of politics, and individual working out of social problems is a vestige of the bourgeois system, one is told. In a way only through this system can the Communist government get the personnel of necessary scientific skill to work for it, for few scientists will voluntarily want to do this.

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